

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

- 88-17
1. A system for managing transactions between a first computer system and a second computer system, comprising:
 - a management file containing at least one transaction type-attribute string having a mask format with a corresponding action value; and
 - a process that determines what action to take in accordance with the at least one transaction type-attribute string.
 2. The system recited in claim 1, further comprising a gateway computer to which the first and second computer systems are connected, and through which the first and second computer systems communicate with one another, wherein the process is executed on the gateway computer.
 3. The system recited in claim 2, wherein the manager file is loaded into a memory residing on the gateway computer at runtime.
 4. The system recited in claim 1, wherein the management file further contains an additional at least one transaction type-attribute string having a corresponding action value, the additional at least one transaction type-attribute string not having a mask format
 5. The system recited in claim 4, wherein the process looks for a literal match prior to looking for a non-literal match, the match being made with a match transaction type-attribute string determined by the process.
 6. The system recited in claim 5, wherein the process performs an action determined by the transaction type-attribute string having the minimum mask matching the match transaction type-attribute string.

7. A method for managing transactions between a first computer system and a second computer system, comprising the steps of:

- (a) creating a manager file containing at least one transaction type attribute string having a masked format and a corresponding action value;
- (b) receiving an inbound transaction request ;
- (c) processing the inbound transaction request;
- (d) determining a response transaction type-attribute string having an appropriate attribute for responding to the inbound transaction request;
- (e) determining if the response transaction type-attribute string matches one of the at least one transaction type-attribute strings in the manager file; and
- (f) if a match is found, responding to the input transaction request in accordance with the action value associated with the action value corresponding to the transaction type-attribute string that matched the response transaction type-attribute string.

8. The method recited in claim 7, further comprising the steps of:

- (g) populating the manager file with at least one additional transaction type-attribute string with a corresponding action value, the at least one additional transaction type-attribute string not having a mask format;
- (h) determining if the response transaction type-attribute string literally matches are of the at least one additional transaction type-attribute strings; and
- (i) if there is a literal match, responding to the inbound transaction request in accordance with the action value associated with one additional transaction type-attributes strings that matched.

9. The method recited in claim 8, further comprising the step determining if there is literal match prior to determining if there is a match requiring a mask.

10. The method recited in claim 8, further comprising the step of generating an error message if there is no transaction type-attribute string that matches the response transaction type-attribute string.

11. The method recited in claim 7, further comprising the step of storing the manager file in a computer memory at runtime.

12. The method recited in claim 8, further comprising the step of using the transaction type-attribute string having the minimum mask but still matching the match transaction type-attribute string.

13. The method recited in claim 8, further comprising the step of repeating steps (a) through (i), for each attribute in a response type corresponding to the input transaction request.

14. A system for managing computer transactions between a first computer system and a second computer system, comprising:

a gateway computer providing communication between the first computer system and the second computer system.

a process, which when executing on the gateway computer, takes a transaction request from the first computer system, reformats the transaction request into a request the second computer system can process, transmits the reformatted transaction request to the second computer system, receives a response transaction from the second computer system, reformats the response transaction into a format the first computer can process, at least a portion of the

response transaction being based on a table having one or more transaction type-attribute strings having a mask format.

15. The system recited in claim 14, wherein the table is stored in a memory on the gateway computer.

16. The system recited in claim 15, wherein the table is stored in memory at runtime.

17. The system recited in claim 14, wherein the table includes at least one additional transaction type-attribute string that does not have a mask format.

18. The system recited in claim 17, wherein the process determines a response transaction type-attribute string from the response transaction type string and one of the transaction type strings in the table.

19. The system recited in claim 18, wherein the process looks for a literal match prior to looking for a non-literal match.

20. A data structure stored in a computer memory, comprising: a plurality of transaction code-attribute pairs, each transaction code-attribute pair comprising a transaction code portion and an attribute portion, wherein at least one of the plurality of transaction code-attribute pairs contains a mask value.

21. The data structure recited in claim 20, further loaded into the computer memory at run time.

22. The data structure recited in claim 29, further comprising a plurality of transaction code attribute pairs having a mask value in the transaction code portion, wherein the mask value of at least one of the transaction code portions of the plurality of transaction code attribute pairs

having a mask value in the transaction code portion replaces only a portion of the transaction code portion.

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